

REMARKS

Claims 1-24 are pending. Claims 1, 2, 7 and 13-15 have been amended to improve consistency and clarity, and to cancel certain claim changes made by Applicants' amendment dated May 18, 2005. No new matter has been added. Applicants reserve the right to pursue original claims and other claims in this and in any other application. This submission accompanies an RCE.

Claims 1-16 and 20-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Fu et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,370,271). Claim 18 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Fu et al. Claim 17 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Fu et al. in view of Hasuo (U.S. Pat. No. 5,583,614). Claim 19 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Fu et al. in view of Funada (U.S. Pat. No. 5,257,119). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that Fu et al. is an improper reference against the present application under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). The present application claims priority to Japanese patent application 11-2437 filed January 8, 1999. Attached is a certified translation of the Japanese priority document. The effective filing date of the present application predates the Fu et al. filing date. Fu et al. is not prior art to this application.

In view of the above amendment, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Dated: December 22, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

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